Farmingville, NY - Town of Brookhaven Planning Department officials presented the Redevelopment Initiative, or Blight to Light code amendments, to the Suffolk County Planning Commission at their October 6, 2010 meeting, where the Commission unanimously voted to approve it 11 - 0. Suffolk County Planning Commission approval is necessary for the Town Code to be amended.

"This is a major step forward for the Blight to Light initiative," said Supervisor Mark Lesko, "The redevelopment code amendments provides incentives where none existed before to encourage private sector redevelopment and turn Blight into Light. I thank the Suffolk County Planning Commission for their support and look forward to working with them in the future."

David Calone, Chairman of the Suffolk County Planning Commission, said, "The Redevelopment Initiative can be viewed as the 'reverse broken window theory' - blight can be contagious, but the elimination of blight in a community can create an upward spiral of positive redevelopment that transforms neighborhoods and brings hope to long neglected communities. The set of tools that Brookhaven has introduced can serve as a regional model for other Long Island towns struggling with their own blighted parcels. The Suffolk County Planning Commission applauds Supervisor Lesko's visionary efforts to turn Blight into Light."

Michael Kelly, Member of the Suffolk County Planning Commission representing Brookhaven said, "On the way to the Planning Commission meeting, I passed by the site of the former Bellport Outlets - which is a perfect candidate for the Redevelopment Initiative. I know this has been a priority for Supervisor Lesko and the innovative new redevelopment code amendments presented by Brookhaven are real incentives for the building community. I am proud to represent Brookhaven and hope other towns follow suit by offering incentives to the private sector, not punishing them, to eradicate eyesores in communities."

Sarah Lansdale, from Sustaintable Long Island and an at large member on the Suffolk County Planning Commission, said, "I am pleased to see that Brookhaven embraced modern planning tools and community based planning principles, such as adaptive reuse, and recognized the importance of how blight affects communities."

Michael Kelly, who represents Brookhaven on the Commission, made the motion to approve the Redevelopment Initiative, which was quickly seconded by Linda Holmes, Shelter Island's representative.

The Suffolk County Planning Commission is responsible under state and county law for identifying and promoting county-wide land use values and planning priorities through the review of individual development projects and municipal policies as well as through the creation of an overall comprehensive plan for Suffolk County's future. The County Planning Commission has members from each town in the county who are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Legislature.

The Brookhaven Town Board is scheduled to hold public hearings on the Redevelopment Initiative "Blight to Light" code amendments on October 19. The new code amendments will introduce attractive private sector incentives for the redevelopment of blight. Each project will be "scored" in three different categories: blight severity, location characteristics, and potential for re-development. For example, a project may receive points if the property has been vacant for decades and is a haven for crime, has community support, generates tax revenue and jobs, is a mixed-use project, is LEED compliant, and is located in a downtown or near a transit hub.

The combined "redevelopment achievement" score the project receives determines the level of the incentive package from the Town. The incentive packages, in order from the most basic incentive package to greatest incentive package, are:

- Illuminated Initiative Package: A redevelopment achievement score of 80-100 points.
- Bright Initiative Package: A redevelopment achievement score of 101-120 points.
- Radiant Initiative Package: A redevelopment achievement score of 121-140 points.
- Brilliant Initiative Package: A redevelopment achievement score of greater than 140 points.
If a project were to qualify for the Brilliant Incentive Package, the incentives under the Redevelopment Initiative, if adopted, could include:

- Expedited review by all Boards and Departments in the Town.
- 100% waiver of Town application and permit fees.
- Building permit refunds for LEED certified projects.
- An increase in Floor Area Ratio (FAR) through a special permit from the Town Planning Board.
- Shared parking credits.

Division of Public Information * Office of the Supervisor
One Independence Hill • Farmingville • NY 11738 • Phone (631) 451-6595 • Fax (631) 451-6258